NO GREAT SHAKESPEARIAN OPERA UNTIL RECENTLY

CONCERTS OF THE WEEK.

SUNDAY—Young Men's Symphony Orchestra, Arnold Volpe, conductor, Aeolian Hall, 3 P. M.
Edith Rubel Trio, Princess Theatre, 8:15 P. M.
John McCormack, Hippodrome, 8:30 P. M.
Edward Zinco, barytone, Carnegie Chamber Music Hall, 8:15 P. M.
Concert of Peoples Music League, Schola Cantorum; Kurt Schindler, conductor; Albert Spalding, violinist; David Mannes, speaker, Cooper Union Hall, 8:15 P. M.
Yvette Guilbert, Maxine Elliott's Theatre, 8:15 P. M.
Arion Society, Carl Hahn, conductor, Arion clubhouse, 8:15 P. M.
TUESDAY—Mme. Ratan Devi, in a recital of East Indian Music, Hudson Theatre, 3:30 P. M.

By W. J. HENDERSON.

THE various celebrations of the tercentenary of Shakespeare have shaped themselves unfortunately along conventional lines. Perhaps the best of their features has been the attempt at performance of some of the plays in some such manner as they were given in Shakespeare's own time. The representations of the stage spectacles as they were then constituted should be instructive, albeit they are not unlikely to mislead the uninformed, for before Shakespeare the "machines" of Italy were famous. Nor can these reproductions promise us any faithful replica of the delivery of the lines by the Shakespearian actor of 1600.

To the music lover they suggest perhaps an inquiry into the origin and history of opera on Shakespearian themes. Even this has yet to be written. Some few points are obvious, however, and the most prominent is that half a century elapsed after the dramatist's death before the first opera was made out of one of his plays. The work chosen was "The Tempest," and the composer who produced his work in 1673 was Matthew Locke. He also tried his skill upon "Macbeth."

Henry Purcell, who might have been expected to do great things with the works of the bard of Avon, composed in 1678 the overture, instrumental music and the masque in Shadwell's version of "Timon of Athens." He composed music for Shadwell's version of "The Tempest" in 1690 and wrote "The Fairy Queen," an adaptation of "Midsummer Night's Dream," in 1692.

If we pursue the history of Shakespearian opera composition to its present period we shall doubtless be astonished at many things. "Hamlet" has tempted many composers. It was first set in 1715 by Domenico Scarlatti, son of Alessandro Scarlatti, the father of the Neapolitan school of opera. Domenico was not especially distinguished as an opera writer. He was a famous player of the harpsichord, the Paderewski of his time, and he wrote piano compositions which are still performed.

Among other masters who essayed to compose music for "Hamlet" was Caruso. There is no record that he was an ancestor of the tenor idol of today, but there is no reason why he might not have been. His first name was Luigi and he was born at Naples in 1754 and turned out a goodly number of operas, both serious and of the buffa type. We find him marching along the conventional lines of his time with "Artaserse," "Scipione in Cartagine," "Giunio Bruto," "Allessandro nelle Indie" and other serious operas of the stereotyped classic variety and interspersing among them such titles as "La Virtuosa alla Moda," "Gli Scherzi della Fortuna," "La Sposa Volubile" and others, proving him to be a true disciple of Pergolesi. The subject of "Hamlet" seems to be entirely out of his range of vision. Doubtless he treated it in the traditional manner of the classic opera seria of the post-Handelian epoch. Of course the only "Hamlet" opera known to the present stage is that of Ambroise Thomas, produced in 1868.

"Romeo and Juliet" has been made into opera seventeen times. All save one are buried. The most important were those of Zingarelli, Milan, 1796; Steibelt, Feydeau, 1793, and Bellini, Paris, 1859. Of dozens of other Shakespearian operas only a very few are worth mentioning. "King Lear" seems to have discouraged musicians. Andre at Berlin in 1780 and Reynaud at Toulouse in 1888 essayed the work. "Macbeth" has been set several times, once indeed by Verdi (Florence, 1847); but the scores are forgotten. Chelard's "Macbeth" given in Paris in 1827 suggests only the interesting record that the text was by Rouget de Lisle, author and composer of the "Marseillaise." Wilhelm Taubert's "Macbeth" given in Berlin in 1857 is worthy of mention because Johanna Wagner, sister of Richard, sang *Lady Macbeth*.

All the great Shakespearian operas were written more than two centuries after the poet's death. Those which hold the stage are Nicolai's "Merry Wives of Windsor," 1849 (popular in Germany); Goetz's "Taming of the Shrew," recently revived at the Metropolitan (1874); "Romeo et Juliette," 1867; "Hamlet," 1868; Verdi's "Otello," 1887, and the same master's "Falstaff," 1893. Even so important a composer as Rossini wrote an "Otello," but it is buried.

No great Shakespearian opera has ever been written by an Englishman. There are perhaps two or three reasons for this. Purcell was the one Briton who had the necessary genius, but he came too early in the development of lyric art. The Italian opera was only in its infancy when Shakespeare died, and although it had the makings of a Hercules it was not quite equal to the task of expounding the greatest of dramatic poets.

The choice of subjects for operatic treatment fell first upon classic stories. The librettists for the youthful Florentines, who made the first essays in the field of modern recitative, followed the light of their forerunner Angelo Poliziano, whose "Orfeo" was the first of modern lyric dramas. Peri and Caccini dealt with the same tale, but called their works "Euridice." Monteverdi, the first real genius in the domain of opera, writing eight years later, again gave the world an "Orfeo" and also an "Arianna."

Thenceforward till long after the death of Handel in 1759 the classic heroes and demigogues peopled the operatic stage, and even when the genius of Rameau and Gluck adorned the lyric theatre of France Orfeo and Iphigenia and Castor and Pollux still strutted their brief hour.

In the first years of the lyric drama some attempt was made at illusion, but as soon as the aria form had become the dominating feature of the opera, which was the case in the middle of the seventeenth century, the attitude of composer and public toward the musical setting of a drama was radically changed.

Voices were now employed merely for their vocal effects. Men and women were cast promiscuously for male or female roles. Tenors appeared as old women. Male sopranos enacted the parts of the Cesars or Roman senators. And all the voices were high ones, sopranos, altos and tenors. Basses figured in minor parts or at least rarely in important ones. Many operas had no low voices in their scores.

It was not till the last years of the eighteenth century that a return to dramatic realism was made. When Mozart wrote the first great barytone role, *Don Giovanni*, he did much to restore the lyric drama to a state of artistic sanity. Gluck also furthered the work. Finally came the psychological revolution loosely called the romantic movement, published in literature in the works of Goethe, Schiller, Lessing, Moricke and other German poets and in music in the operas of Weber and the songs of Schubert.

Mozart had demonstrated the power of music to denote character. These later masters proved its capacity for the expression of the most subtle emotions. The way was at last opened for the adequate musical treatment of the Shakespearian drama. Before music had acquired this technic of expression Shakespeare was inaccessible to the composer.

All the early attempts at setting his plays failed because the composers followed the conventions of the lyric stage. There was nothing else to do. It was not by the inventions of any one master, but by the slow accumulation of materials that musicians finally were enabled to create a convincing melodic utterance for the thoughts of a *Romeo* or a *Hamlet*. And even the musical poesy of Gounod and Thomas is convicted of weakness by its very juxtaposition with the mighty dreams of Shakespeare.

Music needed still more wealth of expression, and it remained for the great Verdi to find thoughts which might stand unabashed beside those of the dramatist. And thus we see that the only really great Shakespearian operas are those of our own time. The original *Iago* and *Falstaff*, Victor Maurel is living in this city and teaching operatic art.

Mr. Maurel has been the greatest exponent of the Verdi Shakespeare music drama. Three centuries after the dramatist he is teaching others something of his art. It was 244 years after the dramatist's death when Mr. Maurel created the intensely psychological and intellectually subtle role of *Iago*, a characterization utterly impossible to the music of 1623, even if any composer had conceived the idea of undertaking it.

Recently musicians have seemed to satisfy their desire for dramatic matter by raking over the productions of the modern theatre. Even the prose melodrama has been utilized. "Fedora," "Tosca," "Madama Butterfly," "The Girl of the Golden West" and similar libretti will readily recur to the mind of the reader. Also perchance he may recall how much better material one musician found when he chose a great poetic tragedy, "L'Amore dei Tre Re," and another when he drenched himself in the remote and pallid passions of Maeterlinck.

Possibly the finest and most imaginative Shakespearian operas are yet to be composed. Certainly there are several which invite operatic treatment and which contain fancies filled with food for music.

The Ballet Russe closed its season at the Metropolitan Opera House last evening. Much excited and purposeless comment has been written about this company and its doings. The management was from first to last an extraordinary problem to any disinterested observer. The pers[illegible]

John McCormack, Farewell Concert, Hippodrome To-night

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Yvette Guilbert, Maxine Elliott's Theatre, To-night, Tuesday Afternoon, May 2, Friday Afternoon May 5, Sunday Evening May 7.

Guiomar Novaes, Brazilian Pianist to be Heard in Festivals

Mme Ratan Devi Indian Folk Song Interpreter Hudson Theatre, Tuesday Afternoon May 2.

CONCERTS, RECITALS, NOTES OF MUSIC.

The Young Men's Symphony Orchestra, under the direction of Arnold Volpe, will give the concluding concert of its fourteenth season on Sunday afternoon, April 30, at Aeolian Hall. Charles Naegele, a young American pianist, will make his first appearance on this occasion, playing the Grieg concerto. The orchestral numbers will comprise Dvorak's "New World" symphony, Tschaikowsky's Elegie and Valse from the serenade for string orchestra and Nicolai's overture to "The Merry Wives of Windsor."

John McCormack, the popular Irish tenor, will give his final concert of the season at the New York Hippodrome this Sunday evening. Donald McBeath and Edwin Schneider will be the assisting artists. The programme, consisting mostly of "request numbers," is as follows: Arioso, "Che gelida manina," from "La Boheme," Puccini, Mr. McCormack; minuet, Haydn, "Deutscher Tanz," Mozart, Mr. McBeath; "Singers' Consolation," "The Soldier," Schumann, "When Night Descends," Rachmaninov, "Song of Spring," Mendelssohn, Mr. McCormack; "Romance," Wieniawski, Mr. McBeath; Irish folk songs: "Norah O'Neale," "The Ballynure Ballad," "Kathleen O'More," arranged by Hughes, "The Irish Immigrant," arranged by Baker, Mr. McCormack; allegretto, Boccherini-Kreisler, "Liebesfreud," Kreisler, Mr. McBeath; "The Bitterness of Love," James P. Dunn, "The Old Refrain," Viennese song arranged for and dedicated to Mr. McCormack by Fritz Kreisler, "When the Dew Is Falling," Edwin Schneider; "Hosanna," Jules Granier, Mr. McCormack.

The Edith Rubel Trio, Edith Rubel, violin; Vera Poppe, 'cello; Brenda Putnam, piano, will give a recital of folk songs with narrative this evening in the Princess Theatre. The programme will comprise songs of Holland, Germany, Denmark, England, Scotland, Wales, Ireland, Spain, Serbia, China, Japan, Russia, Greece and the Orient, Canada, France, Hungary and a group of eight songs of the Kentucky mountains taken and used by courtesy from the collection made by Josephine McGill, with arrangements and adaptations by William Lyndon Wright.

The third concert of the season given by the Arion Society, Carl Hahn conductor, will be given at the Arion Club house, Fifty-ninth street and Park avenue, this evening. Frank van der Stucken, formerly conductor of the Arion and honor guest of the occasion, will conduct three choral works of his own, "Gefunden," "Mailied" and "Festzug." Ecce quam bonum. Compositions by Richard Wagner, Liszt, Chopin and Bizet are also on the list. Among the a capella numbers are the "Jagdlied" of Mendelssohn and Brahms's "Wiegenlied." An orchestra of sixty men and Marie Morrisey, contralto; Rafael Diaz, tenor, and John Powell, pianist, will assist the choir.

The People's Music League of the People's Institute will give its final concert of the season this evening in Cooper Union hall. David Mannes will make an address and the Schola Cantorum, Kurt Schindler, conductor, and Albert Spalding, violinist, will present the music of the evening.

George Dostal, American tenor, will give a concert in the Brooklyn Academy of Music this evening. He will be assisted by Lucile Orrell, 'cellist, and Mary Warfel, harpist. Emil Polak will be at the piano.

The Wanamaker Auditorium announces the second of a three weeks Shakespearian festival under the auspices of the New York City Shakespearian Tercentenary Celebration as beginning to-morrow afternoon. Three separate programmes, each running an entire week, illustrating the influence of William Shakespeare upon music, constitute the plan of the whole presentation.

That Ratan Devi, interpreter of East Indian music, has made an impression on the American public is evidenced by the announcement that she will give a second recital in New York on the afternoon of May 2 at the Hudson Theatre. Her second programme will contain many new numbers, but it will also retain the more popular ones, such as "Kauna jatana," given before. Dr. Coomaraswamy will speak on Indian music again, as his remarks are quite necessary to the fuller understanding of the Indian conception of musical interpretation.

Men and women who sing, who have some knowledge of sight reading or who have had some choral experience are cordially invited to become members of the chorus which is to take part in the Community Masque to be given in the stadium of the College of the City of New York the last week in May.

The masque has been written by Percy MacKaye and the music has been composed by Arthur Farwell.

Rehearsals are being held in the auditorium of the High School of Commerce, 155 West Sixty-fifth street, west of Broadway, Tuesday evenings at 8:15, and it will only be necessary for singers to present themselves there on the evenings of May 2, 9 and 16. There will be no trial of voices, but a fair knowledge of sight reading is requisite.

The annual Bach festival, J. Fred Wolle conductor, given at South Bethlehem, Pa., will take place on Friday, May 26, and Saturday, May 27. The programmes will be given as follows: Friday afternoon, "Christmas Oratorio," parts I., II. and III.; Friday evening, "Christmas Oratorio," parts IV., V. and VI.; Saturday afternoon, mass in B minor. The Bach Choir of 200 voices, with soloists, organist and trombonists, will take part in the festival. The performance of the mass will be divided into two parts, beginning at 2 P. M. and 5 P. M. There will be ample time after the performance on Saturday to take trains to all points east and west. Further information may be obtained at this address: A. C. Huff Music Store, Bethlehem, Pa.

The Arbuckle Institute Choral Club of Brooklyn, Bruno Huhn conductor, will give its second and final concert of the season on Wednesday evening, May 3. The programme will comprise a varied selection of part songs, including old Irish and Scottish numbers, and compositions by Schubert, Mendelssohn and other writers. The soloists will be Gertrude Hale, soprano, and Harold Berkly, violinist.

Belle Storey, soprano, and Hugh Allan, barytone, will give a joint recital at the Biltmore Hotel Sunday evening, May 7.

The auxiliary committee to the Pontifical Institute of Sacred Music will give a "Missa Solemnis" on Wednesday forenoon, May 10, at 10 o'clock at the Church of St. Francis Xavier. The music of the mass will illustrate the three types of church music approved by the Holy See, namely, Gregorian chant, classic polyphony and modern music.

The Cecilia Society of Boston at its concert to be given in Symphony Hall on May 4 will present for the first time in America "Le Chant de la Cloche," by Vincent d'Indy. In a prologue and seven tableaux the composer depicts in this work incidents in the life of Wilhelm, a master bell founder, the masterpiece of whose career is a great bell, which rings only after his death.

Philadelphia recently filled its large Academy of Music for several performances of the Mahler Choral Symphony, and the hope is being entertained that Boston and its suburbs will now give similar support to the initial performance in this country of a work considered by its admirers to be of no less importance.

MUSIC TEACHERS AND PUPILS.

Mme. Laura E. Morrill, the distinguished vocal teacher, is giving her last reception of the season at her studios in Hotel Majestic on May 18. Her pupil, Miss Ethel Frank, well known as a concert singer, gave a concert in Steinert Hall, Boston, on Thursday evening, the 27th, with great success. Mrs. Morrill's summer school opens June 1 in the Hotel Majestic.

Mme. Buckhout will sing at the twenty-fifth anniversary concert at the Y. W. C. A., in West 124th street, on Monday evening, May 1. "A Lonely Maiden Roaming," Branscombe; "Love in April," Kriens; "You and I," Ward Stephens; "Awake," Loomis; "I Am the Wind," Kroeger; "A Valentine," Gilberte, and "Dearie," James. All are sung by Mme. Buckhout are dedicated to her by the composers.

SOCIETY AND THE WOMEN'S CLUBS

Continued from Second Page.

club. The entertainment was under the patronage of Mrs. Elihu Root, Mrs. Samuel Hopkins Adams, Mrs. Alexander Coburn Soper, Mrs. Archibald Alexander Forrest, Mrs. Abel Edward Blackmar, Mrs. Norman J. Marsh and Mrs. William McLaren Bristol. The concert was followed by dancing.

At the Bel Canto Club's reception on Friday evening for its president, Mme. Beatrice Goldie, a scene from "The Taming of the Shrew" was given by Alberto Gallatin and Robert Stuart Pigott. Miss Helene Davis sang character songs and the other artists were the Misses Lu Garda and Florence Mayer in vocal duets, Myrtle Chapman Willis, who was heard in dramatic readings, and Vincent Coppola, who played some piano numbers. The accompanist was Miss Ora McCord.

Miss Blanche E. Tupper, daughter of John L. Tupper and granddaughter of the late Capt. Henry P. Carr, U. S. N., was married on Wednesday morning to Joseph P. A. Daly. The ceremony was followed by a breakfast at the Hotel Netherland, after which the bride and bridegroom left for a Southern wedding trip. Upon their return they will reside at Brightwaters, L. I.

The bride's sister, Miss Virginia Tupper, was her only attendant, and Thomas Collins was the best man.

Mr. and Mrs. Charles Chapness Harrison of 175 West Seventy-second street announce the engagement of their daughter, Miss Rosalind Harrison, to T. Hamilton Burch, Jr. The wedding will be celebrated in June. Mr. Burch is the son of Dr. T. Hamilton Burch of this city.

Another June wedding will be that of Miss Mildred Johnson Hazen to Lawrence D. Ford, son of Rear Admiral and Mrs. John D. Ford of Baltimore. It will take place on June 24 at the home of the bride's parents, Mr. and Mrs. Joseph K. Hazen in Orange. The engagement has just been announced.

Mr. and Mrs. James F. Lester of 485 Central Park West have announced the engagement of their daughter, Miss Mabel Wheeler Lester, to T. Holbrook Townsend. Mr. Townsend is the son of Mrs. Edward S. Townsend of 801 West End avenue.

William F. Sternberg of this city and Miss Olga Adams of Boston have become engaged. Miss Adams is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Henry P. Adams and one of last winter's debutantes.

Mr. and Mrs. George Raymond of 116 West Eighty-seventh street have announced the engagement of their daughter, Miss Viola Raymond, to Frederick W. Young of Pittsburg, Pa.

Mr. and Mrs. William G. Chave of 410 Riverside Drive announced the engagement of their daughter, Miss Mildred Brittain Chave, to Frederick Beekman McCracken of Newark on Wednesday at a luncheon given for her at their home. Mr. McCracken is related to the Beekman family of this city and the Barkalows of New Jersey and was graduated from Princeton.

Mrs. Josephine Hobson of 511 West 135th street announces the engagement of her daughter, Miss Ruth Hobson, to William C. Butehorn of West New Brighton, Staten Island.

BROOKLYN SOCIAL NOTES.

IN honor of Mrs. J. Lewis Luckenbach, her son's bride, Mrs. Edward Luckenbach gave a large dance at the Heights Casino on Friday evening. The ballroom was decorated with Southern smilax and dogwood and Japanese parasols shaded the side lights. Supper was served at midnight while Neapolitan musicians wandered among the guests singing and playing for their entertainment.

The bride before her marriage in January was Miss Katie-bel McGregor of San Francisco.

Miss Evelyn Carruth Beavers, who is to be married to Russell Ward Earle on Tuesday, May 8, and her sister, Mrs. William Pitman Earle, Jr., were the guests of honor at the reception given by Mrs. Clarence Reginald Hyde on Friday afternoon at her home, 242 Henry street.

Invitations have been issued for the wedding of Miss Alice Leonard Rogers, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. William Arthur Rogers of Buffalo, N. Y., and Richard Dwight Hillis, son of the Rev. Dr. Newell Dwight Hillis, pastor of Plymouth Church, and Mrs. Hillis. The First Presbyterian Church in Buffalo will be the scene of the ceremony on Tuesday evening, May 16, and a reception will follow at the home of the bride's parents, 309 North street.

Miss Julia Anne Stone of Ithaca, whose engagement to Paul Girard Haviland of Brooklyn was announced last month, was the guest of honor at the reception which his mother, Mrs. Edgar Franklin Haviland, gave on Thursday at her home, 1372 Dean street. Miss Stone is the daughter of Prof. John Stone of Cornell, of which she and her fiance are graduates.

The board of managers of the Heights Casino will give a dance next Friday evening to members and guests.

At the home of Mr. and Mrs. Edward H. Litchfield, 2 Montague terrace, Mrs. Field's Literary Club will hold its Shakespearian celebration next Thursday evening.

Mrs. Cornelius Perry of 142 Joralemon street and her daughter, Mrs. Robert B. B. Foote, received on Friday and Saturday afternoons.

The young people of the First Presbyterian Church on the Heights will give three one act plays to-morrow evening in the auditorium of the Central Y. M. C. A. The proceeds will be used to continue the summer fresh air work at the City Park branch of the church on Concord street.